

## **BUILD's Racial Equity Point of View**

Until now, BUILD's Theory of Change has been silent on racial disparities that exist in the education, health and well-being of young children and their families. It neglected to state as an imperative that early childhood systems building must focus on addressing those disparities that are at the root of unequal childhood outcomes. BUILD also did not name the source of the disparities, namely racial privilege that benefits some children and not all. But BUILD appreciates that a core prerequisite of effectively meeting the needs of young children and their families is recognition of the relationship between the existing disparities (including opportunity and achievement gaps), racial privilege, and institutional and structural racism.

Systems building work at all levels can be neither "colorblind" nor passive. It must intentionally level the playing field in terms of power so that public action, allocation of resources, and oversight are shared responsibilities of a representative leadership. All actions need to be assessed to ensure their impact is equitable for children and families of diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds and for families of diverse socio-economic status.

When BUILD talks about racial equity, we are promoting early childhood systems work that identifies and addresses the root causes of disparities and applies remedies to correct them.

### **A racially equitable early childhood system will:**

- Ensure that all children have an opportunity to develop and reach their full potential, without experiencing discrimination or bias within the early childhood system.
- Ensure that early childhood systems provide equitable opportunities and resources for excellent educational and developmental outcomes for children from groups historically discriminated against due to race.
- Take action to correct or respond to discrimination in other arenas that negatively impact young children and their families.
- Intentionally build leadership at all levels that reflect the racial diversity of the population served.
- Ensure systems recognize and provide culturally and linguistically responsive services contoured to the needs of the child in the context of the child's family and community.
- In a racially equitable early childhood system, race and place will no longer be predictive of children's healthy development and readiness for success in school and life.